

HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY.

SEVENTIETH SEASON.

In Memoriam

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL.

Born at Halle, February 23, 1685.

Died at London, April 18, 1759.

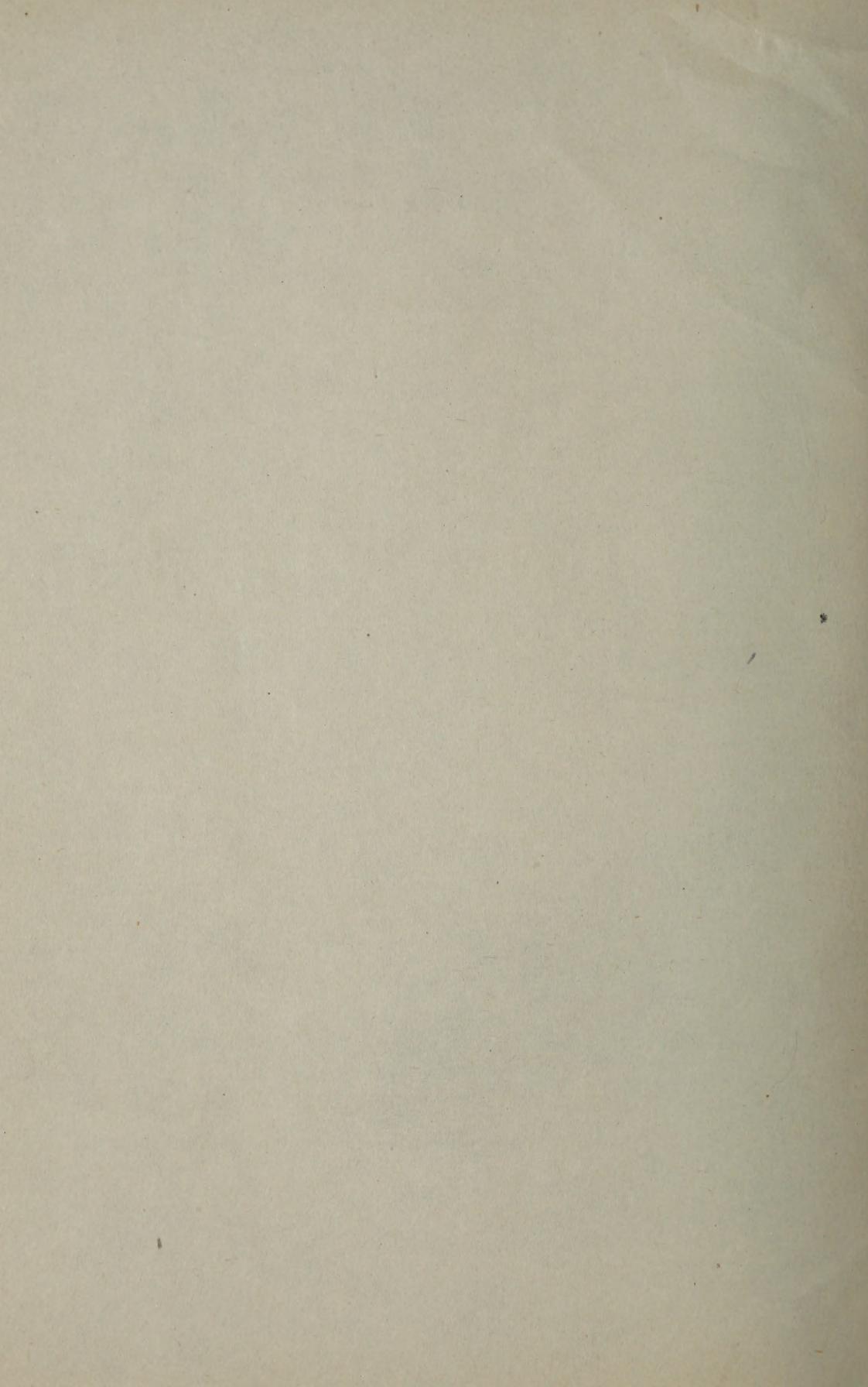
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF HANDEL. PROGRAMMES WITH WORDS AND
DESCRIPTIVE AND HISTORICAL NOTES. LIST OF HANDEL'S
WORKS PERFORMED BY THE SOCIETY.

BOSTON MUSIC HALL.

DECEMBER 21, 1884, *The Messiah.*

FEBRUARY 22, 1885, *Selections from Handel's Oratorios.*

APRIL 5, 1885, EASTER SUNDAY, *Israel in Egypt.*





g. F. Handel. & Septemv: 12
1741. .

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF HANDEL.

“The one or two immortal lights
Rise slowly up into the sky,
To shine there everlastingly.”

THE NEW AGE, Matthew Arnold.

MEN of exceptionally great genius are at long intervals born into the world and in due season taken out of it; but, unlike ordinary mortals, though dead, they still live in every sense save the material, with power to color the lives, shape the thoughts, and strengthen the moral fibre of succeeding generations. Such men are rightly regarded as among the chief benefactors of the human race; and when dates recur which mark the beginning and the end of their sojourn on earth, it is customary to stimulate the too quickly dulled sense of what we owe them by memorial services in their honor.

To recite the dead poet's verses, to exhibit the dead painter's pictures, to sing the dead musician's songs, is to make his works praise him, and to justify the renown which they have given him.

Upon all but the very greatest of these, time exercises a benumbing power, and this because none else rise above the level of popular taste, which, with every receding tide, leaves many of its late idols stranded on the shore. Thus it happens that works, often of great merit, which have ministered in no small degree to the enjoyment of one generation, are dead to the next. Only the fittest which appeal to the unchanging elements of human nature survive to receive centennial homage. When we render it to a DANTE, a SHAKESPEARE, a MILTON, or a HANDEL, we celebrate the “survival of the fittest,” and testify to the brightness of these fixed stars in our firmament whose continuous shining proves that an exceptional measure of the Divine is occasionally granted to man.

Among the few who have largely realized the potential ideal of humanity in one aspect is GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL, the bicentennial anniversary of whose birth at Halle, Feb. 23, 1885, will be celebrated in Germany, in England, and in America with equal fervor.

While his great contemporary, JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH, born at Eisenach on the 21st of the following month, was the son of a musician, and the descendant of musicians whose names had been known in Germany for more than a century, HANDEL came of no musical race, and had a surgeon for his father, who intended him for the law. As well try to turn the current of a mountain stream with a walking stick as by paternal fiat to divert a HANDEL from running his appointed course. CANUTE bidding the sea waves to stay their advance was not more powerless to work his will than was Meister Georg. His son had what EMERSON calls that “crowning fortune of a man, to be born to some pursuit which finds him in employment and happiness”; and the pursuit to which he was born was destined to bring happiness to thousands of his fellow-creatures as well as to himself. He had a mission which no obstacles could prevent him from fulfilling.

On an old clavichord or dumb spinnet concealed in his father's garret, he taught himself to play, and this so skilfully that when, at the age of seven, he was allowed to finger the manuals of the organ at Weissenfels one Sunday morning after service, he convinced the reigning duke of his genius, and through his intervention obtained a promise from his father that his musical studies should be no longer interfered with.

On returning to Halle, he became the pupil of ZACHAU, then organist of the Liebfrauen Kirche, and, although obliged to attend school and to pursue classical studies as a preparation for future admission to the bar, acquired within three years all that his master could teach him of the theory of music, learned to play with skill upon the organ, harpsichord, violin, and oboe, and was in the habit of writing for each week an original sonata for organ or harpsichord, or a church cantata for voices and instruments.

Wider opportunities of improvement than Halle afforded awaited the young musician at Berlin, where he was sent about 1696, to listen to the concertos and operas which formed the delight of the court of the Elector FRIEDRICH, and where, living in the company of such distinguished foreign composers as ATILIO ARIOSTI and BUONONCINI, he daily astonished all who met him by the precocity of his genius. The Elector would have sent HANDEL to Italy to complete his studies, but the offer was refused by his father, who recalled him to Halle, where he distinguished himself not only as a musician, but as a Latin scholar, and in 1702, at the age of seventeen, was admitted to the University. At this time, he was offered the post of organist at the cathedral, with a fixed salary and an official residence, and entered upon a customary year of probation, but, at its close, "wandering thoughts came into his head." The pent-up Utica of Halle seemed too small a field for the exercise of his powers, his temperament was too active, his ambition too lofty to content itself with the narrow round of duties connected with such a post, and so he threw up the appointment and set forth to tempt fortune in a wider sphere. Hamburg, being the city where sacred and dramatic music was most assiduously and successfully cultivated at the time, attracted him, and, on arriving there in 1703, he was admitted to the orchestra of the Opera House as *ripieno* (second violin), from which modest position he was promoted to the conductorship, after he had revealed his extraordinary powers when called upon during the director's absence to fill his place at the harpsichord.

MATTHESON, the composer, to whom we owe so much valuable information about HANDEL, was his chosen friend and associate at Hamburg, and but for a lucky chance might have been his murderer. They quarrelled when HANDEL refused to give up his place as conductor during the latter part of the performance of MATTHESON's opera of *Cleopatra*, and, in the duel which followed the career of the great composer would have been cut short had not a brass button on his coat received and turned aside the thrust of his antagonist's sword.

While discharging his duties at the Opera

House, HANDEL wrote many airs, cantatas, and fugues, as well as a *Passion Oratorio*, which was performed on Good Friday, 1704. This first essay of the master as a composer of oratorio music was not to be followed for a long time by the great works of its kind upon which his fame chiefly rests. For seven years the stage was his chosen field, and on it during that period he produced nine operas, the first of which, *Almira*, was performed at Hamburg, July 8, 1705. Much of the music in this opera was used in later works, of which it must suffice to mention that gem of song, *Lascia ch' io pianga*, originally a saraband in F. Such fresh use of his musical ideas, habitual with HANDEL, is analogous to the common practice with painters and sculptors to repeat their works with but slight changes.

The skilful jeweller resets the precious stone, and each time to better advantage. No one can cavil at such a practice; but it is less easy to defend the liberties which HANDEL is alleged to have taken with the ideas of other composers, although, if proven, it is evident that he treated them with a skill of which their originators were incapable.

In the eighteenth century the standard of artistic morality was much lower than is that of the present day, and the taking of one's material where one found it, which would now be regarded as a heinous crime, was looked upon as but a venial offence. MARSHALL, writing on HANDEL in GROVE's Dictionary, quotes what HEINE said when SCHELLING complained that HEGEL had stolen his ideas: "He was like a shoemaker accusing another shoemaker of having taken his leather and made boots with it." This is what HANDEL did when he saw fit to appropriate other men's musical property; and, although the proceeding was not legitimate, we have no heart to criticise it in the light of the result.

In 1706, after three years passed at Hamburg, HANDEL went to Italy, to perfect himself in the management of the voice. His first Italian opera, *Rodrigo*, brought out at Florence, in the summer of 1707, met with great success, as did the second, *Agrippina*, produced shortly after at Venice before an enthusiastic audience, whose cries of "Long live the dear Saxon!" filled the house. Fresh triumphs awaited him at Naples, and at Rome, where he lived with the Marchese

RUSPOLI, and brought out an oratorio, the *Resurrection*, and made music with CORELLI and the SCARLATTIS.

After his return to Germany in 1710, he was appointed capellmeister to the Elector of Hanover, who four years later became KING GEORGE I. of England. Handel spent the greater part of these four years in England, his second fatherland. He reached London in November or December, 1710, and on Feb. 24 of the following year brought out his opera of *Rinaldo* at the Haymarket with immense success. This, perhaps his finest dramatic work, was, it is said, written in the short space of fourteen days. It is a single instance of a habitual rapidity of composition, unsurpassed in musical annals save by HANDEL himself, whose greatest work, the *Messiah*, was written in twenty-four days. Although he poured forth the stream of thought as a volcano pours forth lava, his manuscripts prove by their numerous erasures, substitutions, and corrections, that, despite the speed at which his habit of improvisation, his abundance of ideas, and his command of all the resources of harmony and counterpoint enabled him to write, he was never tempted to rest content with anything short of the attainment of his ideal.

During his first visit to England, which terminated with the close of the opera season in June, HANDEL made many friends, and had constant opportunity for the display of his wondrous ability, both as composer and performer. Nowhere, however, did he so frequently shine as at the Thursday-evening concerts given by THOMAS BRITTON, the famous "Small Coal Man," in the second story of his house, in Aylesbury Street, where the low-studded concert-room, approached by an exterior flight of steps little better than a ladder, was filled each week with ladies of rank, and men eminent in the musical world as professors and amateurs. The warmth of HANDEL's reception at these concerts and elsewhere and the great success of his opera made it difficult for him to turn his back upon London; but his duties as capellmeister obliged him to return to Hanover, where he spent the greater part of a year in their performance and in the composition of many duets, cantatas, and German lieder. The Elector then allowed him to return to London on short leave, which,

as it turned out, was to be indefinitely prolonged. In November, 1712, he brought out a new opera, *Il Pastor Fido*, at the Queen's Theatre, and followed it up with another, *Teseo*, in December.

The year 1713, which we have now reached, is memorable in the life of HANDEL as that during which he first partially revealed his mighty individuality as a composer of sacred music in the *Birthday Ode* performed on the 6th of February in honor of Queen Anne's forty-sixth birthday, and in the *Te Deum* with its noble *Jubilate*, sung at St. Paul's Cathedral on the 7th of July, in commemoration of the Peace of Utrecht. Music written for special occasions is seldom of the composer's best; but, to this rule, that of "the dear Saxon" makes an exception. The two works of which we are speaking, and others which might be mentioned, go far to prove that, whether the call to action was subjective or objective, he answered it with equal vigor. The second chorus of the *Jubilate*, "Serve the Lord with Gladness," a double fugue, whose first subject, after being formally exposed by the voices, becomes an instrumental accompaniment to the second subject, a fragment of ecclesiastical plain chant; the chorus, "Glory be to the Father," with its long-sustained vocal chords of majestic effect; and the chorus, "As it was in the beginning, Amen," with which the work concludes, are truly and vitally Handelian.

It will be remembered that the Elector had accorded but a short leave of absence to his capellmeister, who, however, found England so attractive that the struggle between inclination and duty went on in his mind with doubtful result for four years, during one of which he lived in London, and at Barn Elms, in Surrey, with Mr. Andrews, a distinguished amateur, and for the other three at Burlington House, Piccadilly, where he found equal opportunity for studious retirement and refined social intercourse. Stolen pleasures are proverbially the sweetest, and London, with Hanover looming in the background, may have seemed all the brighter; still it is hardly to be doubted that, when the death of Queen Anne, Aug. 1, 1714, transformed the Elector of Hanover into GEORGE I., king of England, HANDEL felt a sensible relief. Some time elapsed, however, before he made his peace with the new

sovereign. He had not only played truant, but he had aggravated this offence by writing a *Te Deum* in honor of the Peace of Utrecht, a political event altogether distasteful to the house of Hanover. Fearing, therefore, a chilling reception, HANDEL kept away from court; and, although the royal family listened with the London world to his new operas, *Silla* and *Amadigi*, the king took no notice of him until nearly a year after his arrival in England, when the royal ears were so bewitched with the *Water Music*, a suite of twenty-five pieces, by HANDEL, performed at an aquatic fête given in August, 1715, that he permitted the penitent to appear at court, and sealed the accorded pardon with a life pension of £200. This, with the pension of like amount, previously granted by QUEEN ANNE, and a third, afterwards bestowed by QUEEN CAROLINE, with the appointment of preceptor to the princesses, her daughters, raised HANDEL'S income to £600 a year.

In the following year he accompanied the king on his visit to Hanover, and while there composed a second *Passion Oratorio*,—notable as his last setting of a German text. After its performance, he returned to England and became musical director to the Duke of Chandos, for whom, during his three years' tenure of office (1717-1720), he wrote the famous *Chandos Anthem*; his first English oratorio, *Esther*, which was performed at Cannons, the magnificent residence of the duke, on the 20th of August, 1720. *Acis and Galatea*, and his first set of lessons for the harpsichord, one of which, the fifth, terminates with the *Harmonious Blacksmith*. Among these compositions, we have only space to say a few words of the oratorio; not in the way of analysis, but simply to point out that it marks an era in the history of music as the first of a long series of works of its kind of an absolutely novel character.

These works are neither operas, based on sacred librettos, like the Italian oratorios, nor Scripture scenes interspersed with chorales, like the German, but settings of the most striking Bible episodes to music so admirably balanced between the strictly ecclesiastical and the purely secular that, although it combines religious feeling with dramatic spirit, it suggests neither the church nor the

opera. Like Bible history, which stands apart from any other history on ground of its own, the music of HANDEL has its peculiar place apart from any other music; and its unity with the text is so perfect that, while it serves to heighten and bring out the dramatic force and epic grandeur of the words, it is as much a part of them as the foliage is a part of the tree of which it is the natural outgrowth. Vivid as are the pictures which the Bible narratives evoke, they are illumined with a brighter light by HANDEL'S music. As we listen to it, we see the towers of Jericho totter and crumble; we behold the triumph of JUDAS MACCABÆUS, and watch the overthrow of PHARAOH and his hosts when the horse and his rider are drowned in the Red Sea. As we call the Bible frescos with which one of the greatest of painters decorated the loggie of the Vatican the Bible of RAPHAEL, so may we call the Bible oratorios in which one of the greatest of musicians gave voice to the same venerable stories the Bible of HANDEL.

In 1727, the year after he had been naturalized as a British subject, HANDEL wrote an anthem for the coronation of GEORGE II. *Deborah* and *Athaliah* were produced in 1733, *Alexander's Feast* and several organ concertos in 1736. With these exceptions, his compositions were operatic, from 1720, when he retired from Cannons and became the responsible director of the Royal Academy of Music, to 1737, when he left England for a season, broken in fortune and in health. During these seventeen years he had written twenty-nine operas, three oratorios, and an anthem, had discharged the multifarious duties of a manager, which were in his case peculiarly harassing, owing to the jealous quarrels of his chief singers, LA CUZZONI and LA FAUSTINA, fomented by a partisanship which divided London into hostile camps; and, as if these things and all that they include were not enough, he had been obliged to contend against the attractions of a rival opera house opened in Lincoln's Inn Fields by BUONONCINT, who at last succeeded in carrying off his principal singer, SENESINO; had suffered by the collapse of the Royal Academy in 1723, and had brought financial ruin upon himself by a three years' management of the Covent Garden Opera. No wonder that a stroke of

paralysis and extreme nervous prostration followed. With *The Messiah* and *Israel*, his two greatest works, yet unwritten, his career seemed ended; but, fortunately for the world, the sulphur waters of Aix-la-Chapelle restored his strength, and when the death of QUEEN CAROLINE (Nov. 20) deprived him of one of his kindest friends, he composed an anthem to be sung at her funeral, on Dec. 12, which proved that his powers were unimpaired, and bore witness, by its pathetic beauty, to the depth of his emotion at her loss.

Although still oppressed by it, with health not yet fully re-established, and with debts yet undischarged, HANDEL resumed his London career early in 1738, and successively produced three new operas at the King's Theatre in the course of as many months. About this time, the pressure of debt was happily removed from his shoulders by the proceeds of a benefit organized by his friends at the King's Theatre on the 28th of March, which enabled him to satisfy his most clamorous creditors. Not only was the house crowded, but, as we learn from Dr. BURNEY, when the curtain rose, five hundred persons of rank and fashion were discovered on the stage. During the next three years, HANDEL* wrote the *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* (1739), *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and *Il Moderato*, and two operas, *Imeneo* and *Deidamia* (Feb. 10, 1741), with which last-named opera he bade farewell to the stage, and gave himself up to the composition and production of the great oratorios with which his name is especially identified. These followed between 1739 and 1752, at the rate of one in some years, and of four or five in others, in the following order: 1739, *Saul* in January and *Israel* in April; 1741, *The Messiah* in November; 1743, *The Dettingen Te Deum* in August; 1744, *Joseph and his Brethren*; 1745, *Belshazzar*, March; 1746, the *Occasional Oratorio* in February; 1747, *Judas Maccabæus* in April; 1748, *Alexander Balus* and *Joshua* in March; 1749, *Solomon* in March; the *Firework Music* in April; the *Foundling Hospital Anthem* in May; and *Susanna* in May or June; *Theodora*, written also in 1749, but first performed in March, 1750; *Jephthah* in February, 1752; *Time and Truth*, 1757.

To these works, *Semele*, *Hercules*, and *Al-*

reste, written between 1743 and 1750, are to be added, and an infinite number of sonatas, fugues, concertos for organ and hautboy, etc., etc.

Having given the oratorio of *Saul* at the King's Theatre in January, and *Israel* in April, 1739, with but moderate success, HANDEL was glad to accept the invitation of the Duke of Devonshire, lord-lieutenant of Ireland, to bring out some of his works at Dublin, and accordingly left London in November, 1741, for the Irish capital, carrying with him the yet untried score of *The Messiah*. His first series of concerts, at which *L'Allegro*, *Acis and Galatea*, the *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*, *Esther*, and a number of organ concertos were performed, met with such success that a second followed, before the completion of which the Dublin *News Letter* apprised the public that "Mr. HANDEL's new grand oratorio, *The Messiah*, would be performed on Monday, April 12, 1742, at the Music Hall in Fishamble Street, for the relief of prisoners in gaols, and the support of a Hospital and a Charitable Infirmary." The immortal oratorio was first sung on the 13th, with HANDEL as organist, MATTHEW DUBOURG, the violinist, as conductor, and Mrs. CIBBER, Signora AVOLIO, Messrs. CHURCH and ROSEINGRAVE as principal singers.

Then, and on its second performance, June 3, it produced a profound impression; and when in August the composer returned home, he left behind him a host of admirers and friends in Ireland, whose regrets at his departure were tempered by the hope of another visit within a twelvemonth. On reaching London, he appears to have entertained the project of once more assuming the direction of the Opera House; but, as the prospects of success were not encouraging, he gave up the idea, and devoted himself to the completion of a new oratorio, *Samson*, which he brought out at Covent Garden, Feb. 18, 1743, with great success. *The Messiah*, first sung in London on the 28th of March, met with less favor than this its more dramatic predecessor, though with each subsequent performance its lofty and pathetic strains took a firmer and yet firmer hold of the national heart, until they became what they still are, as much a part of English life as the words of the New Testament

itself. Even at its first performance, the "Hallelujah Chorus" compelled the audience to an act of homage never before or since paid to music. When the sublime phrase, "For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," was heard, king and people, moved by an irresistible impulse, rose to their feet, and remained standing until the last hallelujah had been sung. From this time, the popularity of *The Messiah* steadily increased, and HANDEL, full of charity for the poor, turned it to their advantage by a series of performances given for the benefit of the Foundling Hospital, of which the first took place in 1750, and the twelfth on May 3, 1759, under the direction of JOHN CHRISTOPHER SMITH, three weeks after the great musician had breathed his last. Nevertheless, the current of his bounty continued to flow from the same source and in the same direction up to 1777, when the last of the annual performances of *The Messiah*, which had then added £10,299 to the funds of the Hospital, took place.

A few months after it was first heard in London, the little village of Dettingen witnessed an engagement between the English and French troops, which terminated in a decisive victory for the former, commanded by GEORGE II. in person. In honor of this event, HANDEL wrote the *Dettingen Te Deum* and *Anthem*, which, on its first performance at the Chapel Royal, St. James's, Nov. 27, 1743, took that high rank among the works of his later period which it has ever since maintained. Being music written by command, and yet a product of the noblest kind, it is one more proof of that singular ability to meet the occasion with full power which has been already spoken of as characteristic of HANDEL. With him, each fresh success was but the prelude to renewed exertion.

For the winter of 1744-5 he planned a series of twenty-four subscription concerts at the King's Theatre, of which he gave sixteen, whose result, owing to the intrigues of his old enemies, the rival party formerly led by BUONONCINI and SENESENO, was financially disastrous. Although nearly bankrupt, he nevertheless hired Covent Garden Theatre for the Lent of 1746, and gave three performances of his *Occasional Oratorio* as an offset to his subscribers of the

previous year for the concerts which he had then been obliged to suspend. In the following Lenten season of 1747, he produced *Judas Maccabæus*, the *Occasional Oratorio*, and *Joseph*; in that of 1748, *Alexander Balus* and *Joshua*; and in that of 1749, *Solomon* and *Susanna*, together with the *Firework Music*, written in honor of the conclusion of peace with the French, and performed April 27 in a building erected in the Green Park. It was repeated a month later at, and for the benefit of, the Foundling Hospital, with an anthem, *Blessed are they who consider the poor*, written expressly for the occasion. At the first performance of *The Messiah* for the benefit of the same institution, in May, 1750, HANDEL played on an organ which he had presented to the chapel, where it may still be seen. Two months earlier, he had brought out *Theodora* at Covent Garden, March 16, and now, feeling the need of rest, he left England for the Continent, where, in August, he was much shaken by a carriage accident near the Hague. Although its ill effects had so far passed away at the close of the year that he was able to return to London and resume his duties, he was really far from well, as the event proved. In February, 1751, he began to write *Jephthah*, and soon after had a threatening of paralysis, which obliged him to retire to Cheltenham, whose waters proved so beneficial that he resumed work, and on the 30th of August completed his last, and one of the finest of his oratorios. His eyesight now began to fail him, and this so rapidly that he was obliged to put himself under medical care. In May, 1752, he submitted to an unsuccessful operation, and a year later became totally blind, or, as there is some reason to suppose, retained but a remnant of sight. This seems probable from his pencilled correction of a note in the score of *Jephthah*, and his signature affixed to a last codicil to his will only a month before his death.

When first told that the restoration of his sight was hopeless, HANDEL's courage forsook him, but in time it revived, and, with the assistance of his friend SMITH as conductor, he carried through the concert season of 1752 without interruption, continuing, as BURNEY tells us, "to play concertos and voluntaries between the parts of

his oratorios to the last with the same vigor of thought and touch for which he was ever so justly renowned."

At the beginning of the year 1758, loss of appetite and failing strength made him sensible that he had not many months to live. Being, however, one of those who prefer "to die in harness," he continued to play concertos on the organ, and even to direct performances of his works, till within little more than a week of his death. On the 6th of April, 1759, at the conclusion of a performance of *The Messiah* at the Hospital, he had a fainting fit, which proved to be the forerunner of the end. "He died," on the 14th, "as he lived," says one of his biographers, "a good Christian, with a true sense of his duty to God and man, and in perfect charity with all the world." Therefore it was that the world, as represented by the three thousand men and women of all ranks, who thronged Westminster Abbey at his obsequies, on the 20th of April, mourned not only for the musician whose genius had

bestowed a priceless heritage upon them and their descendants, but also for the man whose kindly heart had ever prompted him to consider the poor and needy.

Saxon by birth, English by adoption, does he not also belong to us, who are of the same lineage? Yes, to us as to all who speak that Anglo-Saxon tongue, whose most sacred utterances seem doubly sacred when we listen to them through the medium of his inspired music. Our society, which bears his honored name, coupled with that of a kindred spirit, has from its origin labored to keep it in the minds of men by repeated performances of his greatest works, and now, having served this end with unabated zeal for almost seventy years, may well claim the right to unite with the musical societies of England and Germany in commemorating the two hundredth anniversary of his birth. May the three hundredth find it equally able and ready to do like homage to the memory of one to whom the world owes an everlasting debt of gratitude!

HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY.

FORMED, MARCH 30, 1815.

ORGANIZED, APRIL 13 AND 20, 1815.

INCORPORATED, FEBRUARY 9, 1816.

LIST OF HANDEL'S WORKS PERFORMED IN SIXTY-NINE SEASONS.

Title.	First Time.	Number of Times.	Last Time.
<i>The Messiah.</i>	Dec. 25, 1818.	76.	Dec. 25, 1883.
<i>Dettingen Te Deum.</i>	April 1, 1819.	3.	March 1, 1862.
<i>Samson.</i>	Jan. 26, 1845.	33.	May 18, 1877.
<i>Judas Maccabæus.</i>	Dec. 5, 1847.	16.	April 13, 1879.
<i>Solomon.</i>	Nov. 18, 1855.	4.	May 9, 1880.
<i>Israel in Egypt.</i>	Feb. 13, 1859.	6.	March 28, 1880.
<i>Ode on St. Cecilia's Day.</i>	Nov. 28, 1863.	3.	May 1, 1883.
<i>Jephtha.</i>	Feb. 17, 1867.	1.	
<i>Joshua.</i>	April 16, 1876.	2.	April 1, 1877.
<i>Utrecht Jubilate.</i>	May 8, 1880.	1.	

SUNDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 21, 1884.

654TH CONCERT OF THE SOCIETY.

THE MESSIAH.

Miss GERTRUDE FRANKLIN, *Soprano.*

Mrs. ELLA CLEVELAND FENDERSON, *Contralto.*

Mr. GEORGE J. PARKER, *Tenor.*

Mr. D. M. BABCOCK, *Bass.*

Mr. BERNHARD LISTEMANN, *Leader of Orchestra.*

ORATORIO composed in 1741, according to memoranda made by HANDEL on the original score, preserved in the Royal Library, Buckingham Palace, as follows: Part I., begun August 22, completed August 28; Part II., September 6; end of the Oratorio, September 12; filled in on the 14th of the same (month). Text selected by CHARLES JENNENS. First performed, in the New Musick Hall, on Fishamble Street, Dublin, Tuesday, April 13, 1742. Produced in London, at the Theatre in Covent Garden, March 23, 1743. Additional accompaniments by MOZART, 1789; by ROBERT FRANZ, for the use of the Society, 1876. Seventy-seventh performance by the Society; first time, December 25, 1818, in Boylston Hall.

ANALYSIS.

FROM W. S. ROCKSTRO'S LIFE OF HANDEL.

In a letter now in the possession of Earl HOWE, MR. CHARLES JENNENS writes to some unknown friend: —

I shall show you a collection I gave HANDEL, called *Messiah*, which I value highly. He has made a fine entertainment of it, though not near so good as he might and ought to have done. I have with great difficulty made him correct some of the grossest faults in the composition, but he retained his Overture obstinately, in which there are some passages far unworthy of HANDEL, but much more unworthy of *The Messiah*.

It is clear, from this, that the writer wished for an effect at this point, and equally clear that HANDEL contemplated nothing of the kind. Without pausing to inquire whether the Instrumental Prelude was worthy or unworthy of his pen, he simply strove to bring the mind of his audience into the exact condition necessary for the consideration of the solemn story that was to follow. The effect came later, when the wailing minor of the Sinfony gave place to the reiterated major chords of the opening recitative, a contrast than which nothing more beautiful was ever conceived in music. The whole of this recitative is of unapproachable loveliness, and the air which follows is one of the finest compositions of the purely epic class we possess. No picture was ever more clearly or more poetically painted than the long, long course of the straightened highway, as symbolized by the reiterated quavers in the introductory ri-

tornello, the sixth and ninth bars of which are unhappily omitted in ARNOLD'S score, and all later editions based upon it, to the great detriment of the composer's striking idea. Throughout the whole of this portion of the oratorio, the epic element prevails over every other; yet not without vividly descriptive passages, such as the rolling semiquavers in *Thus saith the Lord*, and the sombre unisons in *The people that walked in darkness*, though the poetical imagery of the last-named air, as we now always hear it, is very much weakened by MOZART's delicious clarinet passages, which substitute for the darkness described by Isaiah a dreamy, golden light as softly delicate as that in CLAUDE'S *S. Ursula*, and not one whit less beautiful, though utterly subversive of the prophet's meaning. Then follows the tremendous climax at the words, *Wonderful! Counsellor!* And here the prophetic exordium of the oratorio comes to an end, after having worthily prepared the hearer for the narrative portion which immediately succeeds it. The Story of the Nativity is described in a series of pictures as delicately painted as the *Notte* of CORREGGIO, and, of course, designed to induce precisely similar emotions. The Vigil of the Shepherds is represented by the tranquil *Pifa*, founded upon a Calabrian melody, possibly of great antiquity. HANDEL had treasured this up in his memory ever since he first heard it, thirty-two years previously, in Rome; and he

now used it to such excellent purpose that we are made to see the shepherds abiding in the field long before they are introduced to us in the words of the Evangelist. This wonderful scene finds its climax in the chorus, *Glory to God in the highest*, in which the silvery tones of the old slide-trumpets are heard for the first time, *da lontano*, to represent the music of the heavenly host as the shepherds heard it at Bethlehem, on that night of nights, swelling nearer and nearer at the words *Good-will towards men*, and finally dying away with the gradual departure of the angelic choir in the gentlest *pianissimo* attainable by art.¹ Then follows the flashing *aria d'agilita*, *Rejoice greatly*, a cry of prophetic joy, inspired by the recollection of the celestial concert; after which, the first part concludes with a second promise of comfort in *He shall feed his flock*, another pastoral melody, the touching beauty of which has endeared it to every generation of hearers from the night of its first performance to the present time, and the succeeding chorus, *His yoke is easy*.

The second part relates the sad Story of the Passion, first calling upon us to *Behold the Lamb of God*, and then describing, with ineffable pathos, the sufferings of the Man of Sorrows, despised and rejected of men, bearing our griefs, and wounded for our transgressions, heartbroken with the rebuke of the Almighty Father, yet finding none to comfort Him, even among those for whose iniquities He was cut off out of the land of the living. No attempt is made to separate the harrowing details of the gospel narrative; but the subject is treated, in the words of ancient prophecy, as one long, sorrowful whole, and brought before us with a tenderness of expression to which no words can do adequate justice. It has been said that, in the chorus, *All we like sheep*, HANDEL has given too realistic an interpretation of the words, and described the wanderings of a scattered flock, instead of the backslidings of human sinners; but, as we have elsewhere had occasion to observe, HANDEL has gone more deeply into the matter than the critics who find fault with him. There is folly as well as wickedness in rebellion against the law of GOD. Some men sin through mere thoughtlessness; the disobedience of others is deliberate and intentional. HANDEL has something to say to us about both classes of evil-doers. In the first part of the chorus, he shows how thoughtless sinners take pleasure in their vain conceits. In the second, he describes the fatal

consequences of their rebellion, and the price which must be paid by the Messiah not only for man's wilful disobedience, but even for his foolishness. But there is another side to the picture, and it is painted for us in glowing colors. After the prophetic foreshadowing of the Resurrection in *But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell*, comes the triumphant chorus, *Lift up your heads*; and from this point we are led on, step by step, to the grandest climax of the whole, the glorious *Hallelujah*, which so affected the audience when it was first sung at Covent Garden on the 23d of March, 1743, that the whole assembly, with KING GEORGE II. at its head, rose up as one man, and remained standing until the end of the chorus, a reverent custom which has been continued from that day to this whenever the oratorio is performed in any part of England.² We have no record of any such expression of popular reverence in Dublin; but it is certain that HANDEL himself felt very deeply on the subject; for Miss HAWKINS tells us, on the authority of DR. ALLOTT, dean of Raphoe, that, when questioned as to the impression under the influence of which he composed it, he replied, "I did think I did see all heaven before me, and the great God Himself."³

It needed a very great genius to carry on the interest of the work beyond this point. Many very great geniuses would have thought that enough had already been done; but HANDEL knew that there was more to be said, and felt himself capable of saying it without fear of the depressing influence of an anti-climax. It remained to connect this heavenly hallelujah with man's hope of his own joyful resurrection; and the connection is effected by the lovely *aria di portamento*, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, artfully supported by the simplest possible accompaniment, for the obvious reason that any attempt at massive grandeur must necessarily have produced a weak effect after the excitement of the previous music. After this, we are again led on, through a series of transcendently beautiful movements, including the thrilling air, *The trumpet shall sound*, to the only other chorus in the world that will bear comparison with the Hallelujah, *Worthy is the Lamb*, with its magnificent peroration, *Amen*. If anything can increase the delight we feel in listening to this great choral masterpiece, it is the knowledge that its apparent simplicity veils an amount of learning so great that it needs a

¹ See Forbes's *Life of Beattie*, Vol. II. pp. 79, 80, Letter 146.

² *Anecdotes of Music*, etc.

¹ See Burney, *Commemoration of Handel*, p. 77.

very earnest musician indeed to appreciate it. The effect produced is that of huge, massive grandeur, colossal proportion, majestic breadth hewn out of the solid mass without attention to detail of any kind. The apparently simple machinery by which this effect is attained is, in reality, far more complicated than that em-

ployed for the most elaborate choruses in *Israel in Egypt*, and results, when the climax is reached, in a close canon, worked out with the utmost severity, yet so studiously concealed that the last thing one thinks about, in listening to it, is the labor it must have cost to invent it.

PART ONE.

THE PROPHECIES AND THE FULFILMENT.

OVERTURE. *Grave. Allegro moderato.*

RECITATIVE. AIR. *Tenor.* Comfort ye my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. . . . Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight, and the rough places plain.

CHORUS. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

RECITATIVE. AIR. *Bass.* Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Yet once a little while and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in; behold He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. . . . But who may abide the day of His coming; and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire.

CHORUS. And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

RECITATIVE. AIR. *Contralto.* CHORUS. Behold! a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name EMMANUEL—God with us. . . . O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain! O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid! Say unto the cities of Judah: Behold your God! Arise, shine, for thy light is come; and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

RECITATIVE. AIR. *Bass.* For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross

darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee; and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. . . . The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

CHORUS. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful! Counsellor! The Mighty God! The Everlasting Father! The Prince of Peace!

PASTORAL SYMPHONY (*Pifferari*). *Lar-ghetto.*

RECITATIVE. *Soprano.* There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them; and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them: Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying:

CHORUS. Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good-will towards men.

AIR. *Soprano.* Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold thy King cometh unto thee! He is righteous Saviour, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

RECITATIVE. AIR. *Contralto.* Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. . . . He shall feed His flock like a shepherd, and He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

AIR. *Soprano.* Come unto Him, all ye

that labor and are heavy laden, and He will give you rest. Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

CHORUS. His yoke is easy, and His burden is light.

PART TWO.

THE PASSION AND THE TRIUMPH.

CHORUS. Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.

AIR. *Contralto.* He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

CHORUS. Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows! He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him. And with His stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way. And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

RECITATIVE. AIR. *Tenor.* Thy rebuke hath broken His heart; He is full of heaviness. He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man, neither found He any to comfort Him. . . . Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow.

RECITATIVE. AIR. *Soprano.* He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of Thy people was He stricken. . . . But Thou didst not leave His soul in Hell; nor didst Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption.

CHORUS. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is the King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.

AIR. *Bass.* Why do the nations so furiously rage together? Why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the

earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed.

RECITATIVE. AIR. *Tenor.* He that dwelleth in Heaven shall laugh them to scorn; the Lord shall hold them in derision. . . . Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

CHORUS. HALLELUJAH! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. The kingdoms of the earth are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever. KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS! HALLELUJAH!

PART THREE.

THE RESURRECTION AND THE GLORY.

AIR. *Soprano.* I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep.

QUARTET. CHORUS. Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

RECITATIVE. AIR. *Bass.* Behold I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. . . . The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

CHORUS. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood, to receive power, and wisdom, and riches, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Blessing and honor, glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen! Amen!

Those who wish to leave the hall before the end of the concert are respectfully and earnestly requested to do so during the pause before the final chorus.

SUNDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 22, 1885.

655TH CONCERT OF THE SOCIETY.

SELECTIONS FROM HANDEL'S WORKS,

In Commemoration of the Bicentenary of his Birth.

Mme. FURSCH-MADI, *Soprano.*

Miss EMILY WINANT, *Contralto.*

Mr. WILLIAM J. WINCH, *Tenor.*

Mr. MYRON W. WHITNEY, *Bass.*

Mr. BERNHARD LISTEMANN, *Leader of Orchestra.*

CHORUS.	Immortal Lord	<i>Deborah</i>
CHORUS.	Envy, eldest born of Hell	<i>Saul</i>
TENOR.	Total eclipse	
ALTO.	Return, O Lord of Hosts	
CHORUS.	To dust his glory they would tread	<i>Samson</i>
SOPRANO.	Let the bright seraphim	
CHORUS.	Tyrants no more	<i>Hercules</i>
ORCHESTRA.	Dead march	<i>Saul</i>
BASS.	When storms the proud	
CHORUS.	The mighty power in whom we trust	<i>Athaliah</i>
TENOR.	{ Deeper and deeper still	
ALTO.	{ Waft her angels	<i>Jephtha</i>
CHORUS.	In gentle murmurs	
	When his loud voice	
ORCHESTRA.	Minuet	<i>Samson</i>
CHORUS.	May no rash intruder	<i>Solomon</i>
BASS.	Shall I, in Mamre's fertile plain	
CHORUS.	To long posterity	<i>Joshua</i>
ALTO.	Place danger around me	
CHORUS.	See, from his post	<i>Belshazzar</i>
SOPRANO.	Ask if yon damask rose	<i>Susanna</i>
BASS.	Racks, gibbets, sword, and fire!	
CHORUS.	He saw the lovely youth	<i>Theodora</i>
SOPRANO.	Angels, ever bright and fair	
TENOR.	Sound an alarm	
TRIO AND CHORUS.	See the conquering hero comes	<i>Judas Maccabœus</i>

DEBORAH.

COMPOSED in 1733; completed on February 21. Text by SAMUEL HUMPHREYS. Produced at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, March 17, 1733.

SCENE. *Mount Ephraim.*

Whose anger when it awful glows

To swift perdition dooms thy foes,

Oh! grant a leader to our host,

Whose name with honor we may boast;

Whose conduct may our cause maintain,

And break our proud oppressor's chain.

DOUBLE CHORUS. *Israelitish Priests and*

People. Immortal Lord of earth and
skies,

Whose wonders all around us rise,

SAUL.

ORATORIO, composed by HANDEL in 1738, according to memoranda made by him on the original score, as follows: End of Act I., July 23; end of Act II., August 8; end of *O Fatal Day*, September 27. First performed at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, January 16, 1739. Text prepared by CHARLES JENNENS.

SCENE. *Saul's Palace.*

CHORUS. Envy, eldest born of Hell,
Cease in human hearts to dwell.
Ever at all good repining,
Still the happy undermining,
God and man by thee infested,
Thou by God and man detested.
Most thyself thou dost torment,
At once the crime and punishment.
Hide thee in the blackest night,
Virtue sickens at thy sight.

When the women of Israel sang *Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thousands* (Sam., xviii. 7), they roused SAUL'S envy. In HANDEL's most effective, though simply constructed chorus, "the voices move in strict canonic imitation in a ground bass, which itself, one bar in length, recurs at the outset sixteen times without intermission."

SAMSON.

ORATORIO, composed by HANDEL in 1741, according to memoranda made by him on the original score, as follows: End of first part, September 29, 1741; end of second act, October 11; end of Oratorio, October 29. Text based on MILTON's *Samson Agonistes*, by NEWBURGH HAMILTON. Produced at the Theatre in Covent Garden, February 18, 1743. Performed by the Society thirty-three times between January 26, 1845, and May 18, 1877. During the first year of HANDEL's blindness, *Samson* was performed, and JOHN BEARD sang *Total Eclipse* with great feeling. The view of the blind composer then sitting near the organ affected the audience so forcibly that many persons present wept. (COXE'S *Anecdotes of Handel and Smith*.) In a short recitative, SAMSON prays for death to end his miseries. Then follows a solo, *Return, O Lord of Hosts*, and this is succeeded by the chorus, with contralto solo, *To dust his glory they would tread*. The soprano air, *Let the bright seraphim*, not in the original score, was added a year later. The minuet in the overture forms a part of the religious festival in honor of DAGON, celebrated in the first chorus, *Awake the trumpet's lofty sound*, at which SAMSON, blind and in chains, is present.

RECITATIVE. *Samson.* (Tenor.) O loss
of sight! of thee I most complain.

O worse than beggary, old age, or chains!
My very soul in real darkness dwells.

AIR. Total eclipse! no sun, no moon!
All dark amidst the blaze of noon.

O glorious light! no cheering ray
To glad my eyes with welcome day.

Why thus deprived thy prime decree?
Sun, moon, and stars are dark to me.

RECITATIVE. *Micah.* (Contralto.) Re-
lieve thy champion, image of thy
strength,
And turn his labors to a peaceful end!

AIR. Return, O God of Hosts! behold
Thy servant in distress,
His mighty griefs redress,
Nor by the heathen be they told.

CHORUS. *Israelites.* To dust his glory
they would tread,
And number him amongst the dead.

AIR. *Israelitish Woman.* (Soprano.) Let
the bright seraphim in burning row,
Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow:
Let the cherubic host, in tuneful choirs,
Touch their immortal harps with golden
wires.

HERCULES.

COMPOSED in 1744, according to memoranda made by HANDEL on the original score, as follows: Begun July 19; end of Act I., July 30; end of Act II., August 11; and end, August 17. Text by Rev. THOMAS BROUGHTON. Produced at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, January 5, 1745. The selection is from the scene following the death of HERCULES mourned by the GREEKS.

CHORUS: Tyrants now no more shall dread
On necks of vanquished slaves to tread.
Horrid forms of monstrous birth

Again shall vex the groaning earth.
Fear of punishment is o'er,
The world's avenger is no more.

ORCHESTRA. *The Dead March in Saul.*

Mourning for SAUL and JONATHAN slain at Gilboa. The impressive effect of this most solemn of Funeral Marches, which, unlike most compositions of its class, is

written in a major key (C), is heightened by the muffled drums. It is usually substituted in *Samson* for the Funeral March written by HANDEL for that Oratorio.

ATHALIAH.

COMPOSED in 1733; completed on June 7. Text by SAMUEL HUMPHREYS, in imitation of the drama by RACINE. Produced in the Theatre of the University at Oxford, July 10, 1733. The chorus and contralto air are parts of a harvest festival.

RECITATIVE. *Abner.* (Bass.) When He is in His wrath revealed,
Where will the haughty lie concealed?

He makes this sacred day appear
The pledge of a propitious year.

AIR. When storms the proud to terrors doom,
He forms the dark majestic scene.

AIR. Joad. (Contralto.) He bids the circling seasons shine,
Recalls the olive and the vine;
With blooming plenty loads the plain,
And crowns the fields with golden grain.

He rolls the thunders through the gloom
And on the whirlwind rides serene.
CHORUS. *Priests and Virgins.* The mighty power in whom we trust
Is ever to His promise just.

CHORUS. Give glory to His awful name,
Let every voice His praise proclaim.

JEPHTHA.

HANDEL's last oratorio. Composed in 1751, according to memoranda made by him on the original score as follows: Begun January 21; Part I. ended February 2; entirely completed, August 13; at end of Part II., February 13; and, on next page, 23 of same; at end of oratorio, finis, August 30. Text by Rev. THOMAS MORELL, D. D. Produced at the Theatre in Covent Garden, February 26, 1752. Performed by the Society once, February 17, 1867.

RECITATIVE. *Jephtha.* (Tenor.) Deeper, and deeper still, thy goodness, child, Pierceth a father's bleeding heart, and checks

But ah! how trivial are a wife's concerns,
When a whole nation bleeds, and, grovelling, lies
Panting for liberty and life!

The cruel sentence on my faltering tongue.
Oh! let me whisper it to the raging winds,
Or howling deserts; for the ears of men
It is too shocking. Yet have I not vowed?
And can I think the great Jehovah sleeps,
Like Chemosh, and such fabled deities?

AIR. In gentle murmurs will I mourn,
As mourns the mate-forsaken dove;
And, sighing, wish thy dear return
To liberty and lasting love.

AIR. Waft her, angels, through the skies,
Far above yon azure plain;
Glorious there, like you, to rise,
There, like you, forever reign.

CHORUS. When His loud voice in thunder spoke,
With conscious fear the billows broke.
Observant of His dread command,
In vain they roll their foaming tide;
Confined by the Almighty power,
That gave them strength to roar,
They now contract their boisterous pride,
And lash with idle rage the laughing strand.

RECITATIVE. *Storge.* (Contralto.) 'T will be a painful separation, Jephtha,
To see thee harnessed for the bloody field.

INTERMISSION.

ORCHESTRA. *Minuet.* Third Movement of Overture to *Samson*.

SOLOMON.

COMPOSED in 1748, May 5 to June 13. Text by Rev. THOMAS MORELL, D. D. Produced at the Theatre in Covent Garden, March 17, 1749. Performed by the Society four times between November 18, 1855, and May 9, 1880. The chorus is sung in celebration of the nuptials of SOLOMON and his QUEEN.

CHORUS. May no rash intruder disturb
their soft hours!
To form fragrant pillows, arise, O ye
flowers!

Ye zephyrs, soft breathing, their slumber
prolong,
Whilst nightingales lull them to sleep with
their song.

JOSHUA.

COMPOSED in 1747, according to memoranda by HANDEL on the original score: Part I., July 30; Part II., August 8; Part III., completely finished, August 19. Text by Rev. THOMAS MORELL, D. D. Produced at the Theatre in Covent Garden, March 23, 1748. Performed by the Society twice: April 16, 1876, and April 1, 1877. CALEB's joy at his son's (JOSHUA'S) victories, the setting up of the twelve stones (*Joshua*, iv. 1 to 9), are the scenes selected. OTHNIEL is a young warrior in JOSHUA'S army.

RECITATIVE. *Caleb.* (Bass.) My cup is full;
how blest is this decree!
How can my thanks suffice the Lord and
thee?

AIR. Shall I in Mamre's fertile plain
The remnant of my days remain?
And is it given to me to have
A place with Abraham in the grave?
For all these mercies I will sing
Eternal praise to heaven's high king.

CHORUS. To long posterity we here record
The wondrous passage and the land restored;

In watery heaps affrighted Jordan stood,
And backward to the fountain rolled his
flood.

RECITATIVE. *Othniel.* (Contralto.) Glorious
reward! The task be thine alone;
Transporting thought! Caleb, the town's
thy own.

AIR. Place danger around me,
The storm I'll despise.
What arm shall confound me,
When Achsah's the prize?

BELSHAZZAR.

COMPOSED in 1744, according to memoranda on the original score, as follows: Begun August 23; end of Part I., September 3; end of Part II., September 10; conclusion and last date missing. Text by CHARLES JENNENS. Produced at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, March 27, 1745. By the turning of the course of the Euphrates the Persians were enabled to enter Babylon. This is the incident of the scene selected for performance.

SCENE. *Without the city, the river almost empty.*

CHORUS. *Persians.* See, from his post
Euphrates flies!
The stream withdraws his guardian wave;
Fenceless the queen of cities lies.

SEMI-CHORUS. *Babylonians.* Why, faith-
less river, dost thou leave
Thy charge to hostile arms a prey;
Expose the lives thou ought'st to save,
Prepare the fierce invader's way,
And, like false man, thy trust betray?

SEMI-CHORUS. *Jews.* Euphrates hath his
task fulfilled,
But to divine decree must yield;
While Babel, queen of cities, reigned,
Her flood, her guardian, was ordained;
Now to superior power gives place,
And but the doom of Heaven obeys.

CHORUS. Of things on earth, proud man
must own,
Falsehood is found in man alone.

SUSANNA.

COMPOSED in 1748, according to memoranda on the original score, as follows: Begun July 11; end of Part I., July 21; end of Part II., August 21; end of Part III., August 24. Text presumably by Rev. THOMAS MORELL, D. D. Produced at the Theatre in Covent Garden, in the spring of 1749. SUSANNA's attendant sings, in answer to her request, the song which her husband, JOACHIM, had composed to console her in his absence.

AIR. *Attendant. (Soprano.)* Ask if yon
damask rose be sweet
That scents the ambient air?
Then ask each shepherd that you meet
If dear Susanna's fair?

The spoils of war let heroes share;
Let pride in splendor shine;
Let bards unenvied laurels wear;
Be fair Susanna mine.

THEODORA.

COMPOSED in 1749, according to memoranda on the original score, as follows: Begun June 28; Part II. completed July 5; end of oratorio, July 5; filled out, July 31. Text by Rev. THOMAS MORELL, D. D. Produced at the Theatre in Covent Garden, March 16, 1750. VOLENS is an officer of Rome, by whose persecutions THEODORA, a Christian, suffers.

AIR. *Volens. (Bass.)* Racks, gibbets, sword,
and fire
Shall speak my vengeful ire
Against the stubborn knee;
Nor gushing tears,
Nor ardent prayers,
Shall shake the firm decree.

Rise, youth, he said; the youth begins to rise.
Lowly the matron bowed, and bore away
the prize.

CHORUS. *Christians.* He saw the lovely
youth, death's early prey,
Alas! too early snatched away;
He heard his mother's funeral cries:

RECITATIVE. *Theodora. (Soprano.)* Oh,
worse than death indeed!
Lead me, ye guards, lead me or to the rack,
or to the flames!

I'll thank your gracious mercy.

AIR. Angels, ever bright and fair,
Take, oh, take me to your care!
Speed to your own courts my flight,
Clad in robes of azure white!

JUDAS MACCABÆUS.

WRITTEN by command of the PRINCE OF WALES. Composed in 1746, according to memoranda on the original score, as follows: Begun July 9; end of Act I., July 21; end of Act II., August 2; end of oratorio, August 11. Text by Rev. THOMAS MORELL, D. D. Subject suggested by the DUKE OF CUMBERLAND's victories in Scotland. Produced at the Theatre in Covent Garden, April 1, 1747. Performed by the Society sixteen times between December 5, 1847, and April 13, 1879. The scenes represent JUDAS's departure for battle and triumphant return from the field.

RECITATIVE. *Judas. (Tenor.)* My arms!
against this Gorgias will I go;
The Idumean governor shall know
How vain, how ineffective, his design,
While rage his leader, and Jehovah mine.

AIR. Sound an alarm! your silver trumpets
sound,
And call the brave, and only brave, around.
Who listeth, follow. To the field again!
Justice, with courage, is a thousand men.

on his return from the victory over NICANOR.

SEMI-CHORUS. *Youths.* See the conquer-
ing hero comes!
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;
Sports prepare, the laurel bring,
Songs of triumph to him sing.

SEMI-CHORUS. *Virgins.* See the godlike
youth advance;
Breathe the flutes and lead the dance;
Myrtle wreath and roses twine,
To deck the hero's brow divine.

CHORUS. See, the conquering hero comes!
et cetera.

SCENE. *Near Jerusalem.* ISRAELITISH
YOUTHS AND MAIDENS meeting JUDAS
Those who wish to leave the hall before the end of the concert are respectfully and earnestly
requested to do so during the pause before the final chorus.

SUNDAY EVENING, APRIL 5, 1885.

656TH CONCERT OF THE SOCIETY.

ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

ORATORIO, composed by GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL in 1738, according to memoranda made by him on the original score, as follows: Part I. (present second part), October 1 to 11; Part II., October 20 to November 1. Text mainly selected from *Exodus*, *Psalms*, and *Isaiah*. Produced at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, April 4, 1739, under HANDEL's direction. Seventh performance by the Society; first time, February 13, 1859. Vocal score edited by MENDELSSOHN for the Handel Society, in 1844, according to the original text.

Miss EMMA JUCH, *Soprano*.

Miss ITA WELSH, *Contralto*.

Mr. WILLIAM J. WINCH, *Tenor*.

Mr. MYRON W. WHITNEY, *Bass*.

Mr. JOHN F. WINCH, *Bass*.

Mr. BERNHARD LISTEMANN, *Leader of Orchestra*.

ANALYTICAL REVIEW.

HENRY F. CHORLEY.

The opening of the patched-on Part I. is abrupt, and, though it was twice written by HANDEL, it is still as unfinished as one of those half-plaster, half-brick faces of the Italian churches, which give such poor preface to the splendors within. There is no overture: merely six bars of recitative for tenor to introduce the first chorus. This latter again is prepared for by the eight bars of a single *contralto* voice delivering the theme with a wondrously deep pathos. Observe the strength given to the close of the phrase, *And their cry came up unto God*, by the use of the mass of treble voices in unison with the *alti*,—this being rendered necessary to balance the muscular phrase in the bass instruments, on the working of which to the words, *They oppressed them with burdens*, against the sustained wail or chant, this magnificent chorus in eight parts depends. It is admirable to see how the two contradictory elements of prisoners and their task-masters—of “cry” and “oppression”—are here at once combined and kept distinct; how there is almost the ease of improvisation with the force of a climax, only to be obtained by the employment of scientific resource; and how significant is the touch of poetry and prophecy, in making the prayer of the oppressed predominate at the close of the movement, where all the eight voices unite to tell how the

cry came up unto God—the God who has never forsaken in their distress them that have called on His name. From this point to the end of the work, we have only signs and wonders vouchsafed in answer to “the cry” for the humiliation of the tyrant, and afterwards thanksgivings for the marvels wrought by the Most High for His chosen people. I am not aware whether such possible relation of the first with the last chorus of *Israel* has struck other students of HANDEL: to myself, it places the former in the light of an overture or prelude, and, as such, has a foretaste of one of the devices of romanticism, which has been thought a modern discovery.

After a few bars of tenor recitative—like all the recitatives in this oratorio, of great boldness and vigor—the remainder of the one act (one song excepted) is a chain of choruses.

First, The Plague of the Water turned into Blood, and the loathing of the Egyptians to drink of the river,—a chorus based on one of the most obvious subjects for a chromatic fugue in being, which has been, again and again, employed and wrought out. Nevertheless, so admirably does the phrase fit the humor of disgust, that it is difficult, for a moment, to recollect how well such phrase is known, or not to conceive it invented with an express reference to the portent. The *scorn* chorus in

The Messiah, *He trusted in God* (also a fugue), is not more dramatic in its expression than this. Observe particularly how the *loathing* rises to a point of almost intolerable abomination as the close of the chorus draws near. In this plague, the consequences of the portent are dwelt on, rather than the miracle itself.

The air which immediately follows (*Their land brought forth frogs*) is the first number in which the student may learn to value HANDEL, by comparing him in description with HAYDN. The words suggest associations perilously familiar; but HANDEL, in place of passing them over rapidly, accepted them with all their consequences. Using merely an orchestra of three instruments (this air being originally so thinly scored) to deliver a phrase so closely descriptive as to amount to positive imitation, a stateliness is in the vocal part, a declamatory force is given to the words, which turn aside every fancy to smile that (to be plain) a song about frogs is calculated to excite.

Observe how, in the chorus which immediately succeeds this air, variety had to be given; and try to think what a meaner man might have done if, after representing a Plague of Frogs, he had been compelled to represent "all manner of flies," and lice, and locusts. Here the instinct of inspiration helped out the musician in a manner little short of miraculous. HANDEL seized *He spake the word*, by way of giving relief and basis to a picture which, if only made up of detail, must of necessity have been frivolous, petty, and confusing. The air is full of insect myriads (listen to the restless, whirling, shrill accompaniment — a flight of gnats — told in sound with amazing reality), but the Retributive Power who called this plague forth is never for a moment to be left out of memory. The sonorous force of this phrase — especially when delivered in antiphony, binding the whole movement together, without disturbance to the freest possible play of description in music — makes this chorus one of the most remarkable in a most remarkable series.

More familiar are the next two choruses — the Plague of Hailstones and the Plague of Darkness. The fire is leaping, rioting, tormenting lightning. How frequently HANDEL disregarded all that moderns look to so anxiously — namely, sequence of keys — could be hardly better exemplified than by the fact that from the Insect Plague, in B-flat major, he moved quietly to C major, by way of enforcing his next effect. The subject of this chorus again is said not to be HANDEL's own; but how the

treatment of it *flashes!* — there is no other possible verb, — how do recitation and picture go hand in hand, — prodigious energy and clearness, without a thought, or stint, or less vivid inspiration, than the idea of *fire mingled with the hail which ran along the ground!*

After the Plague of Fire, the next was of thick Darkness! Here, aware of the limits of epithets when admiration is to be repeated, it may be best merely to speak to fact; merely to point out this *recitative* chorus (for such it is, without key, or ordinance, or formal structure), as being in its incompleteness more vague, and fearful, and oppressive (not to mention mere musical contrast) than any stricter rendering of the words might have made it.

In comparison to this, how cruel (to a scimitar-sharpness) is the following chorus: *He smote all the first-born of Egypt*; a fugue in which every phrase of the detached accompaniment *smites*, — is a blow, — and a blow strong enough to smite down the chief of all the strength of Egypt. There is more of vengeance and destruction than of omnipotent retribution in this chorus. It is fiercely Jewish. There is a touch of Judith, of Jael, of Deborah in it; no quarter, no delay, no mercy for the enemies of the Most High. *He smote*; and when, for variety's sake, the scimitar-phrase is transferred from orchestra to voices, it is admirable to see how the same character of the falchion — of "hip-and-thigh" warfare — of victory predominant — is sustained in the music till the last bar. If we have from HANDEL a scorn-chorus in *The Messiah*, — and here a disgust-chorus, referred to a little while since, — this is the execution or revenge chorus — the chorus of the undfinching, inflexible, commissioned Angels of the Sword!

Remark the immediate sequence: *BUT as for His people, He led them forth like sheep*; and remark once again the amazing advantage ministered to him who trusts to the words of Holy Writ in sacred music.

The next chorus, if showing neither the pillar of cloud nor the pillar of fire, is the pillar of confidence, under whose shelter a nation wandering and oppressed may repose in the dry wilderness of desolation which intervenes between bondage and the promised land. The lovely serenity of this movement places it by itself among these choruses of *Israel*.

Observe how, by a master-stroke of genius, in the commencing chords, that which might have been a shock to the ear, in the sequence of a movement in G major to one in A minor (a shock sometimes by HANDEL insolently dis-

regarded), is avoided, and what an exquisite and tender freshness is thereby given to the melody set for *He led them forth like sheep*.

Here it may be remarked, as an object of comparison, how French is the manner of the phrase (though said to be derived from STRADELLA)—a phrase which, with all its beauty, cannot end without a certain surprise (surprise being a known characteristic of French melody). RAMEAU or MONDONVILLE might have penned it; or it might have come from some old *brunette*, the tone to which I allude being even made clearer by the long-sustained *musette* note of the bass. More modern an invention, admitting a certain humor of *bergerie* in it, more accordant with our ideas of green pastures and waters of comfort than with a flock led through the wilderness, a tune could not be. Was there in its application any thought of God's providence transforming the thirsty sand into a fruitful field? Any fancy of manna? Possibly not. But it is noticeable how suggestions of the kind are bred by all true creations. Their character and color, when the clearest, are the most multiform. Yet, again, there is something of the cheerful and inspiriting side of the miracle in this chorus, since when we begin on the words, *He brought them out with silver and gold*, firmness and animation are introduced into the movement. There is something in it of even enjoyment, a flow of happy—not stagnant—calm, the effect of which is indeed delicious, after the terrors and severities that have gone before it.

The chorus which follows, *Egypt was glad*, is that which figures note by note in Sir JOHN HAWKINS's *History of Music*, as a *Canzona* by KERL, there printed without words. The verification of a coincidence so strange, and so strangely overlooked only a few years since, may be said to have reopened the question of HANDEL's debts and plagiarisms. It is needless to point out that to sift and specify these, if done completely (without which the exercise would have little value), would be impossible in studies like these. But it may be asserted that there are certain numbers which, by their scholastic dryness and want of such style as makes them fall into their places as strophes in a complete descriptive poem, bear within themselves their own birth-registers; and seeing that, in the presentation of all such works as the oratorios of HANDEL and the plays of SHAKESPEARE, some discretionary power must be granted (nay, is enjoined by reverence) to those presenting them, it is no sin to suggest

the omission of such matter as is discrepant in style, if not dubious in origin. This chorus might be dispensed with; as also the double chorus two numbers later.

What a print of a giant's foot was made by his first step on the Red Sea shore! How stupendous those few chords, *He rebuked the Red Sea, — and it was dried up*. Even the very break note betwixt the *He* and the word *rebuked*, possibly accidental, gives a sort of separateness and sublimity to Him Who “holdeth the waters in the hollow of His hand”; and the pauses, by suspense, add power to the opening phrase of the movement which immediately succeeds, — *He led them through the deep*, — the stateliest march of a chosen nation, delivered by Omnipotence, ever set in music. Observe, again, how simple is the opposition betwixt the two subjects of this muscular chorus — an ascending scale in slow *tempo* being wrought against the descending scale allotted to the words, *As through a wilderness*, the latter one at four times the speed of the former. The weight of the lower phrase would not have been felt without the flexibility of the upper one.

Animated, however, as this chorus is, it is not rapid; but what a tremendous scream of positive triumph is to be found in that one which succeeds—triumph over the enemy overwhelmed by the waters, “not one” of whom was left! Here is a sublime example of HANDEL's declamatory power, a little helped by that very over-precision with which foreigners are apt to consider the words of a strange language, and which sometimes betrayed him. But here, again, observe HANDEL's immense ease and command of color. The surge, the swell, the storm, the sweep of “the old sea,” the wall of waters “on the right hand and on the left,” and the Jericho breaking down of that wall when the pilgrims to the Land of Promise had passed through, are in this chorus. There is the tremendous, deep, devouring sea; and that cruel and revengeful shout of victory, which gives to so many passages of the Old Testament a fierceness of judicial glory and power, so abundantly rebuked by the more powerful calm and patience of the after portion of Holy Writ.

Here, unconsciously—not, it is to be hoped, irreverently—have we wandered away into more momentous studies than those belonging to chord and chorus; so boundless is the spell of the loftiest religious art if treated as distinct from religious belief. The return from such wandering could hardly be more dryly,

prosaically typified than in the chorus closing the first part of *Israel (And Israel saw)*, which I do not believe to be a pure HANDEL chorus, and which, were I a conductor, I would omit when directing the performance of HANDEL'S sacred Jewish oratorio.

Reminding the student of what was said at the commencement of this analysis concerning the form and order used in composing *Israel*, — also, of the amount of matter in the work which is clearly not HANDEL'S, — we reach the second part of the work, or *The Song of Moses* (as it was originally called), a thanksgiving anthem after the miraculous sea-deliverance of ISRAEL. That this is on a grander scale than *The Messiah* is obvious. Not only, as we have seen, is a double chorus perpetually used, but more *solo* singers are indispensable. *The Messiah* has but one duet in its three divisions: this has three duets in its *one* part. The keynote of the whole composition is struck at once in its opening chorus, *Moses and the Children of Israel*; to which, by the way, the words closing the first part may have been meant to serve as an after link, howbeit superfluous. After a pompous prelude on the grandest scale (another *semi-vocal* overture, again anticipating modern essays of the kind), we have the whole majestic words of MIRIAM'S *Song*, — *I will sing unto the Lord*, — and the musical themes of the chorus, to which MIRIAM answered, exposed, or treated elaborately, by way of commencement. They are little more than repeated, with few touches of change at the close of the oratorio. Yet the first chorus passes over with respect, without enthusiasm on the part of the hearer; whereas, the last one has an effect so entirely the opposite that many may forget that what is entrancing them is no new entrancement. Have we not here a comment on the small differences, in matters of time and place, which yield stupendous results — on the "word in season" — on the happy moment? The introduction of such a burden to *The Song of Moses*, however, stamps it as having been designed wonderfully for the moiety of a work which, as a whole, seems to have been made without design.

Second comes the duet for *soprani* — by ERBA, not by HANDEL (*The Lord is my Strength and my Song*) — though written in a minor key, written on words little less triumphant than the foregoing, — a duet generally sung so poorly as should not be possible. Yet the vocal opportunity for any two *soprani* who could understand lofty words is not a bad one. And this I think, that the great German lover of

HANDEL, MENDELSSOHN, may have felt, since in his incomparable edition of *Israel* it is expressed by an organ part, the beauty of which, had HANDEL sat at the organ himself, could not have been exceeded.

Thirdly, after a few bars of grave chorus, *He is my God* (with a singularly odd phrase — again ERBA'S — for the tenors of the second choir, on the reception of the words, *I will prepare Him an habitation*), comes the *alla capella* movement, *And I will exalt Him*, which may be passed, because, possibly, it may not be HANDEL'S.

Next comes the duet for two bases, *The Lord is a Man of War*, one among many serious bass duets (I might say secular ones) which has never been outdone in musical force — in its truth to the sentiment of the words — in its vocal effect. Listen to the burst of supremacy on the words, *Pharaoh's chariots*; and observe, however often these may be repeated, there is increasing conquest in the sound. Then the end of this superb duet (which, although written in a formal time of music, is written, like the songs of *The Messiah*, with a wondrous emancipation from musical formality) spreads and widens, not without a touch of the sea-tragedy, on the words, *Also are drowned*, and with a consummate vocal and declamatory splendor, of which moderns (some fancy in deeper men than HANDEL) have never dreamed.

After this brilliant duet there is a moment's respite from the jubilation — a moment's picture of the deep, fathomless ocean — in the introduction to the next chorus. The three bars of bass on the same note (F), and the entire form of the phrase on the words, *The depths have covered them*, have a wondrously majestic calm and amplitude. They present in another art the spirit which makes some of VANDERVELDE'S water expanses so solemn — the same which may be found in the introduction to MENDELSSOHN'S overture *Meerestille* — also immense — but *how* different! We shall meet the same colors, the same deep-ocean feeling, the same sentiment of man's powerlessness, later, though with a change of sentiment. Here, after such a picture, flashes out anew the triumph of ISRAEL, in the brilliant double chorus, *Thy right hand, O Lord*, with its second phrase accented by the musician with a foreign accent, — *is become glorious*, — one which may give the student permission to say a word or two on a matter curiously little cared for in England — this same matter of accent in singing. Our vocalists either push too much, or do not speak at all. If these

three syllables be sung in perfect time, without *sforzato*, they will fall into their right musical place, without either musical or verbal sense being outraged. It is difficult to do this, no doubt, because of the place of the notes within the bar. The remark might be profitably borne in mind, as a general counsel to the singers of HANDEL's music.

The next chorus is one of those which are debatable. The subject of the fugue — *Thou sentest forth Thy wrath* — is, for HANDEL, dry, uninteresting, and barren of agreement with the meaning of the verse. All of the master-hand that it presents is the repetition of the word *stubble*, which brings out the one effect of the movement with a certain force.

The next chorus (a single one) seems doubly precious, in contrast with such a piece of arid brain work. Every student will have his own preferences: thus, the only quiet sea-picture which *Israel* contains is among my own most favorite movements: so boundless in poetry is its picturesque form and coloring. Observe that this is the third time the situation has been treated: first, in the chorus, *But the waters overwhelmed their enemies*; secondly, in *The depths have covered them*. No chorus in *Israel* is fuller of matter for remark. The student will observe how the undulating phrase with which it commences bears an almost literal resemblance to that with which MOZART accompanied the words, *Tranquilla sia l'onda*, in the well-known Terzett, *Soave (Così fan tutte)*. There is, perhaps, more peculiarity than truth in the treatment of the scene, at least during its commencement: a fathomless serenity in the phrase, *The waters were gathered together*, somewhat at variance with the idea of *The blast of Thy nostrils*. But what an admirable fertility and grandeur do we find, from the entry of the words, *The floods stood up as an heap and the depths were congealed!* The close, in particular, cannot be exalted too highly as an example of calm, sonorous grandeur of sound.

The next number (*The enemy said, "I will pursue"*) is the only tenor air in the oratorio, — one of those *bravuras* to which allusion has been elsewhere made, not HANDEL's best *bravura*. The abbreviation, *I'll overtake*, though in the taste of the time when the composer wrote, is not acceptable to modern ears, and the change, in some of the divisions, from a two-note phrase to a triplet one, is harassing.

The song immediately following (*Thou didst blow with Thy wind*) — the one air for soprano — is so habitually undersung and mistaken as

to be overlooked; whereas it is, perhaps, the grandest solo in the oratorio. It is a proud, declamatory song, one to be given with a heart haughty rather than thankful (the adoration is to come later in MIRIAM's *Sing ye to the Lord*). The speech or the spirit of the singer's voice should have in them a clarion tone and temper.

The next chorus may be passed by those who accept the idea of things debatable, and the fact — now pretty distinctly accepted — that HANDEL's *Israel* has many things in it which do not belong to HANDEL.

The duet for contralto and tenor (*Thou in Thy mercy*, — the third duet), also debatable, is suave almost to the point of being pathetic. Is there something of the "peril overpast" in it? The minor of the voices in question is in itself languid, not to say melancholy; it is in the minor attempted by HANDEL in his *Messiah* (in the duet, *O Death, where is thy sting*), and there — with respect — not successfully. Here, it affords a repose.

The duet is in D minor. The chorus following, *The people shall hear*, is in E minor, and offers another despotic proof of HANDEL's disregard of all conventions in the succession of keys. The veriest tyro of to-day, who talks as abstrusely as he cannot write, and as dogmatically as he cannot think, would be ashamed of such a piece of slovenly sequence. But this very chorus contains a unique example of instant setting-to-rights. After the chorus was completed, HANDEL found that one clause of the verse, *All the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away*, had been overlooked; and that marvellous episode now existing was inserted by him betwixt the words, *Sorrow shall take hold on them*, and those, *By the greatness of Thy arm*. Great stress has been laid on an afterthought of BEETHOVEN's — the bass, I mean, with its two simple notes, now commencing that colossal *Adagio* to his grand Sonata in B-flat, Op. 106; but how puny and trifling an emanation is that as compared with an interpolation of twenty-three bars, containing an entirely new subject, yet so homogeneous in effect with what precedes and follows it that there is no possibility of our now conceiving the chorus as existing without them! Nor was HANDEL ever more striking in his expression than while treating the words, *shall melt away*. The close of this chorus, with its ascending minor scales, is extraordinarily difficult to sing in tune by a mass of voices. Our singers, if they have not arrived at, are nearing mastery of it.

The air which follows, *Thou shalt bring them*

in, a delicious *cantabile* for the contralto, is the only glimpse afforded us in *Israel* of the Land of Promise—not taken from a Pisgah top, perhaps, but more dreamily and distantly—a prophecy rather than an assurance. The exceeding quietness of its flow, almost always depending on the simplest sequence of three notes, G \textnatural , F \textnatural , E, used with some twenty different distributions, makes it remarkable as an example of rhythmical effect produced by natural means.

And last, after a recitative offering noble scope for declamation, do we come to the culminating point and close of *The Song of Triumph*,—the most stupendous ending, it may be asserted, to any musical work in being,—in adverting to which the student must feel, more than in any other portion of his task, the painful insufficiency of epithet in admiration. What might have been the close of *The Messiah* I have elsewhere ventured to speculate; but, even with the series of three choruses which I have conceived possible, there would have lacked the unity and the variety of the chant, *The Lord shall reign for ever and ever*, a few plain notes broken by the intervening

voice of **MIRIAM**, the prophetess. What a use of a few plain notes! first, in unison, by the *alti* and tenors; then with all the force of the entire eight-part choir. And what an enhancement of accompaniment! by a simple amplification of the stately march of the instruments, which at first upbore the chant; after this a few bars of recitative; and then the chant afresh, one half first, given by the solitary soprano voice of **MIRIAM**, unaccompanied; then chorused; afterward the second half is accompanied; then taken up by chorus and wrought to a close. A more stupendous contrast is not imaginable, nor one which more shakes to its centre the frame of the listener. It is perhaps owing to the arresting life and contrast of this prelude to the close of *Israel* that the repetition of the chorus, *The horse and his rider*, which was heard at the beginning of the part, produces a quadruple effect at its end. Be the singers ever so tired, ever so slack, they never fail to sing this well. The biting antiphony of the words, the amazing animation of the phrases, encourage them till the last notes, which tell how *The horse and his rider hath HE thrown into the sea.*

PART ONE.

THE CAPTIVITY AND DELIVERANCE.

RECITATIVE. Tenor. Now there arose a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph; and he set over Israel task-masters to afflict them with burthens, and they made them serve with rigor.

CHORUS. And the Children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and their cry came up unto God. They oppressed them with burthens, and made them serve with rigor; and their cry came up unto God.

RECITATIVE. Tenor. Then sent He Moses, His servant, and Aaron whom He had chosen; these shewed His signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham. He turned their waters into blood.

CHORUS. They loathed to drink of the river. He turned their waters into blood.

AIR. Alto. Their land brought forth frogs; yea, even in their king's chambers. He gave their cattle over to the pestilence; blotches and blains broke forth on man and beast.

CHORUS. He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies and lice in all their quarters. He spake; and the locusts came

without number, and devoured the fruits of the ground. He gave them hailstones for rain; fire mingled with the hail ran along upon the ground. He sent a thick darkness over the land, even darkness which might be felt.

RECITATIVE. Soprano. Thrice happy Israel in the light of God!

Well may'st thou now take up thy song and sing:—

“Hail, holy Light! offspring of Heaven first born.”

Or hear'st thou rather, pure ethereal stream, Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,

Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice

Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest The rising world of waters dark and deep, Won from the void and formless infinite.

Paradise Lost, Book III.

But soon as Pharaoh re-enjoyed this blessing, he and his people scorned to fear the Lord; and Israel indulged in their request: therefore the Lord again displayed His wrath.

CHORUS. He smote all the first-born of

Egypt, the chief of all their strength. But as for His people, He led them forth like sheep: He brought them out with silver and gold; there was not one feeble person among their tribes. Egypt was glad when they departed, for the fear of them fell upon them.

RECITATIVE. AIR. Bass. He measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out Heaven with a span; and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure; and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. . . . He layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters, and walketh upon the wings of the wind. He maketh His angels spirits, His ministers a flaming fire.

CHORUS. He rebuked the Red Sea, and it was dried up. He led them through the deep as through a wilderness; but the waters overwhelmed their enemies; there was not one of them left.

RECITATIVE. AIR. Bass. God, looking down, confounded all their host, And crazed their chariot wheels. When, by command, Moses once more his potent wand extends over the sea, The sea his rod obeys. On their embattled ranks The waves return, and overwhelm their war.

Wave from wave, congealed with wonder, Stood, a crystal wall, asunder; But rejoined at His dread thunder, Whose right hand their strength controlled.

Jordan's foamy streams complying, From th' Almighty presence flying, Nature's constant laws denying,

To their murmur'ring fountain roll'd.

CHORUS. And Israel saw that great work that the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and His servant Moses.

PART TWO.

SONGS OF PRAISE AND TRIUMPH.

CHORUS. Moses and the Children of Israel sung this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying: I will sing unto the Lord,

for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.

DUET. Sopranos. The Lord is my strength and my song: He is become my salvation.

CHORUS. He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation; my Father's God, and I will exalt Him.

DUET. Basses. The Lord is a man of war, Lord is His name; Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea; his chosen captains, also, are drowned in the Red Sea.

CHORUS. The depths have covered them; they sank into the bottom as a stone. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power; Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of Thine excellency Thou hast overthrown them that rose up against Thee. Thou sentest forth Thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble. And with the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of thesea.

AIR. Tenor. The enemy said: I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.

AIR. Soprano. Thou didst blow with the wind, the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

CHORUS. Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand. The earth swallowed them.

DUET. Alto. Tenor. Thou in Thy mercy hath led forth Thy people which Thou hast redeemed; Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation.

CHORUS. The people shall hear and be afraid, sorrow shall take hold on them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away; by the greatness of Thy arm, they shall be as still as a stone till Thy people pass over, O Lord, which Thou hast purchased.

AIR. Alto. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established.

CHORUS. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

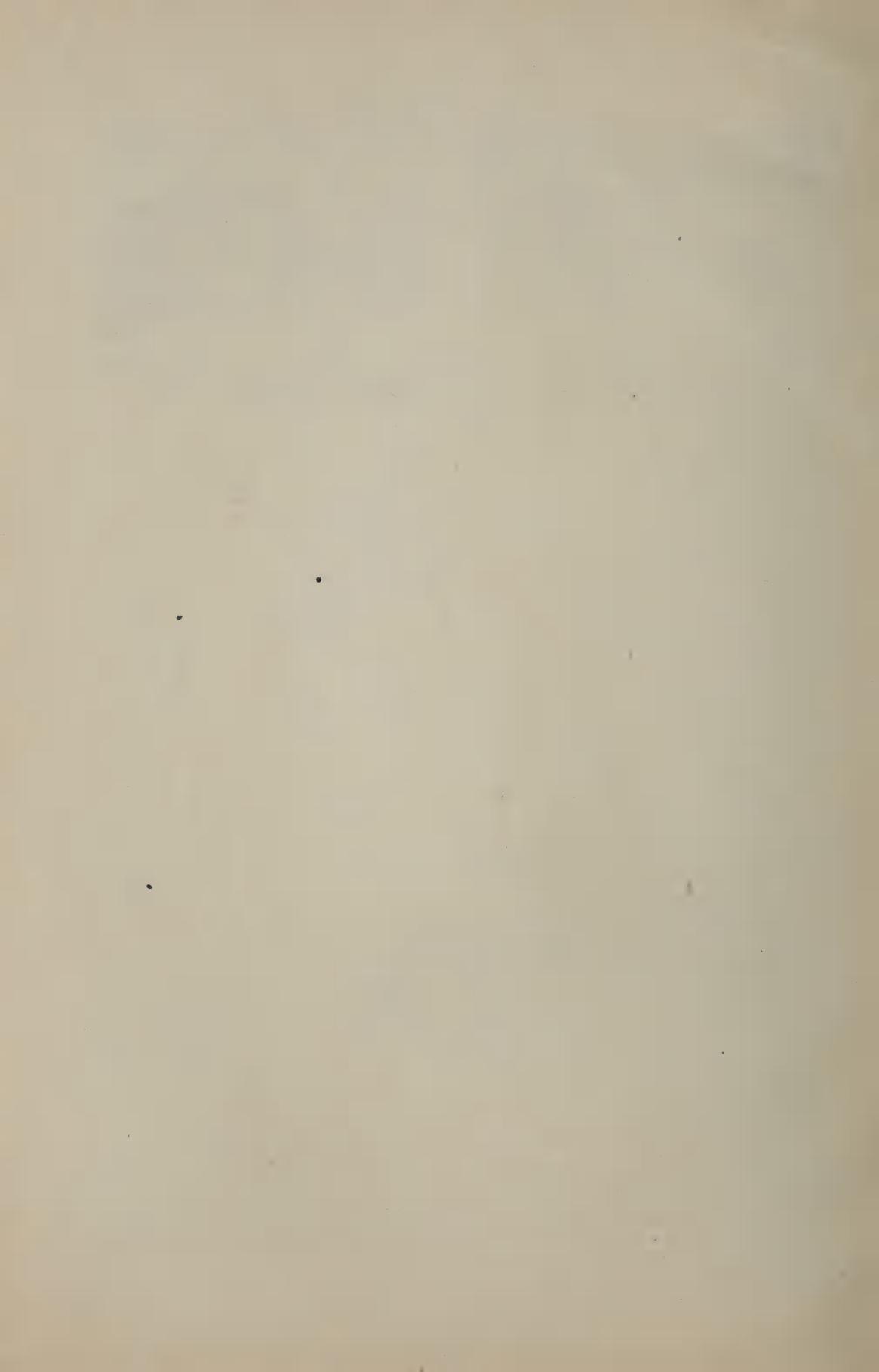
RECITATIVE. *Soprano.* For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the Children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea.

CHORUS. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

RECITATIVE. *Soprano.* And Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances, and Miriam answered them.

SOLO. *Soprano.* CHORUS. Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.

Those who wish to leare the hall before the end of the concert are respectfully and earnestly requested to do so during the pause before the final recitative.





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